

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please add the following *new* paragraph on page 1, between lines 2 and 3:

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This U.S. National stage application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §119(a) to Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-276937, filed in Japan on July 18, 2003, the entire contents of which are hereby incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace the heading at page 2, line 14, with the following rewritten version:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION ~~DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION~~

Please remove the heading at page 6, line 30, as shown:

~~DESCRIPTION OF THE REFERENCE SYMBOLS~~

Please remove the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 31 as shown:

- 1 — ~~joint main body~~
- 2 — ~~nut~~
- 2a — ~~side surface of the nut~~
- 3 — ~~sleeve~~
- 5a — ~~cylindrical part~~
- 5b — ~~slit~~
- 6 — ~~nut~~
- 6a — ~~side surface of the nut (opposing surface)~~
- 10 — ~~pipe~~
- 21 — ~~internal threaded part~~
- 32 — ~~first inclined part~~
- 33 — ~~linking part~~

~~33a — split level part~~
~~34 — second inclined part~~
~~50 — joining hole~~
~~52 — joint part~~
~~53 — first inlet~~
~~54 — second inlet~~
~~55 — stepped part~~
~~55a — end face of the stepped part (split level part of the joint main body)~~
~~58 — external threaded part (threaded part)~~
~~H — gap between the side surface of the joint main body and the side surface of the nut~~
~~R1 — inside diameter of the end face 55a of the stepped part of the joint main body~~
~~R2 — inside diameter of the inclined second inlet 54a of the joint main body~~

Please replace the heading at page 7, line 21, with the following rewritten version:

~~BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT~~ DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE
INVENTION

Please replace the heading at page 17, line 1, with the following rewritten version:

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS: CLAIMS